

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A disk rotating apparatus comprising:
a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom; and
an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, a gap between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller, and said airbearing device is moveable away from said disk held by said rotating shaft.
2. (Previously presented) An apparatus, comprising:
a rotating shaft that holds a disk selectively mounted or removed therefrom;
a disk rotator that rotates said disk around said rotating shaft; and
a positioner that positions a head with respect to said disk, and performs an information recording and/or information reproduction operation; and
an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller, with said air-bearing device being separable from said disk held by said rotating shaft.
3. (Previously presented) A disk rotating apparatus comprising:
a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;
an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller; and
a disk support for supporting said disk and for moving said disk back and forth in a direction of axis of said rotating shaft while said surface of said disk is being supported.

4. (Previously presented) An apparatus, comprising:
 - a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;
 - a positioner that positions a head with respect to said disk, and which performs and information recording and/or information reproduction operation;
 - an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk and wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller; and
 - a disk support for supporting said disk and for moving said disk back and forth in a direction of axis of said rotating shaft while said surface of said disk is being supported.
5. (Previously presented) A disk rotating apparatus comprising:
 - a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;
 - an air bearing device having a smooth surface acting a surface of said disk, wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller; and
 - a disk support for supporting said disk and for moving said disk back and forth in a direction of axis of said rotating shaft while said surface and an end face of said disk are being supported.
6. (Previously presented) An apparatus comprising:
 - a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;
 - a positioner that positions a head with respect to said disk and performs a information recording and/or information reproduction operation;
 - an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller; and
 - a disk support for moving said disk back and forth in a direction of axis of said rotating shaft while supporting said surface and an end face of said disk.
7. (Previously presented) A disk rotating apparatus comprising:

a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;

an air bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a gap between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller, said air-bearing device comprising a space for accessing an end part of said disk, said space being selected from a group consisting of an indentation, a cut-out, a through-hole, and any combination thereof.

8. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;

a positioner that positions a head with respect to said disk, and performs an information recording and/or information reproduction operation;

an in-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller, said air-bearing device having a space for accessing an end part of said disk, said space being selected from a group consisting of an indentation, a cut out, a through hole, and any combinations thereof at said surface facing said disk.

9. (Currently amended) A disk rotating apparatus, comprising:

a rotating shaft that rotates a disk around said rotating shaft;

an air-bearing device, having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a gap between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300 microns or smaller; and

a disk holder for being selectively mounted on and demounted from said disk rotating apparatus, said disk holder mounted on demounted from said disk rotating apparatus while holding said disk.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a rotating shaft for holding a disk selectively mounted and removed therefrom;

a positioner for positioning a head with respect to said disk, and performing an information recording and/or information reproduction operation;

an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing said surface of said disk,
wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is
300 microns or smaller; and
a disk holder selectively mounted on and demounted from said disk rotating
apparatus, said disk holder selectively mounted on and demounted from said
disk rotating apparatus while holding said disk.

11. (Previously presented) An apparatus comprising:
a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk ~~selectively~~ selectively mounted and
removed therefrom;
a positioner that positions said head with respect to said disk, and performs an
information recording and/or information reproduction operation;
an air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk, wherein a
space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is 300
microns or smaller, said disk rotating apparatus being mounted on and
demounted from said apparatus while still holding said disk.
12. (Previously presented) An apparatus comprising:
a rotating shaft that holds and rotates a disk selectively mounted and removed
therefrom;
a disk rotator that rotates said disk around said rotating shaft;
a positioner that positions a head with respect to said disk, and performs an
information recording and/or information reproduction operation;
at least one air-bearing device having a smooth surface facing a surface of said disk,
wherein a space between said smooth surface and said surface of said disk is
300 microns or smaller; and
a moveable ramp-type load mechanism for loading/unloading said heads.
13. (Currently amended) The apparatus of ~~any of claims 1 through~~ 11, further comprising
a moveable ramp-type load mechanism for loading/unloading of a head.
14. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~in any of claims 1 through~~ 12, wherein said
rotating shaft has a part thereof that engages with said disk, with said engaging part having an

engagement tolerance such that said disk slides along said rotating shaft while maintaining a substantially horizontal posture with respect to said air bearing means.

15. (Currently amended) The apparatus in ~~any of claims 1 through~~ 12, wherein said airbearing device has a part thereof that faces at least a port of said surface of said disk and a part continuous therewith that protrudes from said disk.

16. (Currently amended) The apparatus in ~~any of claims 1 through~~ 12, wherein said smooth surface of said air-bearing device is selected from a group consisting of a ring-shaped and a shape that envelopes a ring with a round hole on the inside thereof.

17. (Currently amended) The apparatus in ~~any of claims 1 through~~ 12, further comprising an anchor for selectively anchoring said rotating shaft.